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B O A D I C I A.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

D R U R Y - L A N E.

By Mr. G L O V E R.



L O N D O N :

Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY in Pall-mall; and
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PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. MOSCOP.

BESIDE his native Thames our poet long
Hath hung his silent harp, and kush'd his song.
Kind Commerce whisper'd "See my blissful state,
" And to no smiles but mine resign thy fate.
" Beneath the pregnant branches rest awhile,
" Which by my culture spread this favour'd isle ;
" On that fair tree the fruits of ev'ry coast,
" All, which the Ganges and the Volga boast,
" All, which the sun's luxuriant beam supplies,
" Or slowly ripens under frozen skies, }
" In mix'd variety of growth arise.
" The copious leaves beneficence diffuse,
" Which on affliction drops restoring dews,
" And birds of hope among the loaded sprays }
" Tune with enchantment their alluring lays
" To cheer despondence and th' inactive raise. }
" Rest here, she cry'd, and smiling time again
" May string thy lyre, and I approve the strain."
At length his muse from exile he recalls,
Urg'd by his patrons in Augusta's walls.
Those gen'rous traders, who alike sustain
Their nation's glory on th' obedient main,
And bounteous raise affliction's drooping train. }
They, who benignant to his toils afford
Their shel'ring favour, have his muse restor'd.
They in her future fame will justly share,
But her disgrace herself must singly bear ;

Calm

P R O L O G U E.

*Calm hours of learned leisure they have giv'n,
And could no more, for genius is from heav'n.*

*To open now her long-bid rail she tries,
When vary'd forms of pictur'd passions rise.
Revenge and pride their furies first unfold,
By artless virtue fatally controll'd.
Scenes wrought with gentler pencils then succeed,
Where love persuades a faithful wife to bleed;
Where, join'd to publick cares, domestic woe
Is seen from manly fortitude to flow.
But if her colours mock the candid eye
By spurious tincts, unmix'd with nature's dye,
Ye friendly hands, restrain your fruitless aid,
And with just censure let her labours fade.*

Dramatis personæ.

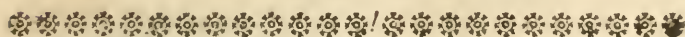
DUMNORIX <i>by</i>	Mr. GARRICK.
TENANTIUS	Mr. BURTON.
EBRANCUS	Mr. MOZEEN.
FLAMINIUS	Mr. HAVARD.
ÆNOBARBUS	Mr. MOSSOP.
BOADICIA	Mrs. PRITCHARE.
VENUSIA	Mrs. CIBBER.

ROMAN AMBASSADOR, ICENIANS, and TRIB-
NOBANTIANS.

SCENE, *the British camp before the tent
of Dumnorix.*



BOADICIA.



ACT I.

SCENE *the First.*

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBANTIANS
and ROMAN Ambassadors.

ROMAN Ambassador.

SUETONIUS, leader of the Roman arms,
With gentlest greetings to th' Icenian queen,
And Dumnorix, the Trinobantian chief,
Sends health, and proffers friendship. Let the
wrongs,

The mutual wrongs sustain'd by Rome and Britain —

BOADICIA.

May stern Andate, war's victorious goddess,
Again resign me to your impious rage,
If e'er I blot my sufferings from remembrance;
If e'er relenting mercy cool my vengeance,
Till I have driv'n you to our utmost shores,
And cast your legions on the crimson'd beach.
Your costly dwellings shall be sunk in ashes,
Your fields be ravag'd, your aspiring bulwarks

B

O'er-

O'erturn'd and leuell'd to the meanest shrub ;
 Your gasping matrons, and your children's blood
 With mingled streams shall dye the British sword ;
 Your captive warriors, victims at our altars,
 Shall croud each temple's spacious round with death :
 Else may each pow'r, to whom the Druids bend,
 Annul my hopes of conquest and revenge !

DUMNORIX to the Ambassador.

You come to offer terms. Stand forth and answer.
 Did not Prasutagus, her dying lord,
 On your insatiate emperor bestow
 Half of his rich possessions, vainly deeming,
 The rest might pass unpillag'd to his children ?
 What did you then, ye savage sons of rapine ?
 You seiz'd the whole inheritance by force,
 Laid waste our cities, with the servile scourge
 Disgrac'd a royal matron ; you deflow'r'd
 Her spotless daughters, stole our noblest youth
 To serve your pride and luxury in Rome ;
 Our priests you butcher'd, and our hoary elders,
 Profan'd our altars, our religious groves,
 And the base image of your Cæsar thrust
 Among the gods of Britain : and by heav'n
 Do you repair to these victorious tents
 With proffer'd peace and friendship ?

ROMAN Ambassador.

Yes, to treat,
 As faith, benevolence and justice dictate.

DUMNORIX.

How shall we treat with those, whose impious hands
 Have rent the sacred bands of mutual trust ?
 How shall we treat with those, whose stony hearts
 Compassion cannot melt, nor shame controul,
 Nor justice awe, nor piety restrain,
 Nor kindness win, nor gratitude can bind ?

ROMAN Ambassador.

Thou art a stranger to our gen'ral's virtues.

No

No pillager, like Catus, but a soldier,
To calm and sober discipline inur'd,
He would redress, not widen your complaints.

DUMNORIX.

Can he restore the violated maid
To her untainted purity and fame?
Can he persuade inexorable death
To yield our slaughter'd elders from the grave?
No, nor by soothing tales elude our vengeance.

ROMAN *Ambassador*.

Yet hear us calmly, e'er from yonder hills
You call the legions of imperial Rome,
And wake her eagles, which would sleep in peace.

BOADICIA.

Begone, and bear defiance to your legions.
Tell them, I come, that Boadicia comes,
Fierce with her wrongs, and terrible in vengeance,
To roll her chariot o'er their firmest ranks,
To mix their soaring eagles with the dust,
And spurn their pride beneath her horses hoofs.

ROMAN *Ambassador*.

Then be prepar'd for war.

BOADICIA.

We are prepar'd.

Come from your hills, ye fugitive remains
Of shatter'd cohorts by their fear preserv'd.
Th' embattled nations of our peopled isle,
Yet fresh from sev'nty thousand slaughter'd Romans,
Shall add yon refuse to the purple heap.
And yet amid triumphant desolation,
Though flames each Roman colony devour,
Though each distracted matron view her infant
Grasp with its tender hands the piercing spear,
Though your grey fathers to the falchion's edge
Each feeble head surrender, my revenge
Will pine unsated, and my greatness want
Redress proportion'd to a queen's disgrace.

BOADICIA,

DUMNORIX.

Go, and report this answer to Suetonius.
 Too long have parents sighs, the cries of orphans,
 And tears of widows, signalized your sway,
 Since your ambitious Julius first advanc'd
 His murd'rous standard on our peaceful shores.
 At length unfetter'd from his patient sloth,
 The British genius lifts his pond'rous hands
 To hurl with ruin his collected wrath
 For all the wrongs, a century hath borne,
 In one black period on the Roman race.

ROMAN *Ambassador*.

Yet e're we part, your price of ransom name
 For the two captive Romans.

BOADICIA.

Not the wealth,
 Which loads the palaces of sumptuous Rome,
 Shall bribe my fury. Hence, and tell your legions,
 The hungry ravens, which inhabit round
 The chalky cliffs of Albion, shall assemble
 To feast upon the limbs of these, your captains,
 Shall riot in the gore of Roman chiefs,
 These Masters of the World. Produce the pris'ners.
[To an Icenian.]

SCENE the Second.

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBAN-
 TIANs, ROMAN AMBASSADORS, ÆNOBARBUS, and
 FLAMINIUS in Chains.

BOADICIA to the *Ambassador*.

Stay, if thou will't, and see our victims fall.

ÆNOBARBUS to BOADICIA.

Dart not on me thy fiery eyes, barbarian.
 Vain are thy efforts to dismay a Roman.
 Life is become unworthy of my care ;

And

And these vile limbs, by galling chains dishonour'd,
I give most freely to the wolves and thee,

ROMAN *Ambassador*.

Mistaken queen, the Romans do not want
These instigations, nor thy proud defiance
To meet your numbers in the vale below.

ÆNOBARBUS *to the Ambassador*.

Then wherefore do'st thou linger here in vain.
Commend us to Suetonius; bid him streight
Arrange his conquering legions in the field,
There teach these rash barbarians to repent
Of their disdain, and wish for peace too late.

ROMAN *Ambassador to ÆNOBARBUS and FLAMINIUS*.

Yes, to Suetonius and the Roman camp
These heavy commendations will we bear;
That for two gallant countrymen our love,
And indignation at their fate may sharpen
Each weapon's point, and strengthen ev'ry nerve,
Till humbled Britain have appeas'd their shades.

SCENE *the Third*.

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBANTIAN,
ÆNOBARBUS and FLAMINIUS.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Come, let us know our fate.

BOADICIA.

Prepare for Death.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Then cease to loiter, savage.

DUMNORIX *to* ÆNOBARBUS.

Now by heav'n

Wert thou no Roman, I could save and love thee.
That dauntless spirit in another breast,
And in a blameless cause were truly noble;
But shews in thee the murderer and ruffian.

ÆNO-

ÆNOBARBUS.

Thy hate, or favour are alike to me.

FLAMINIUS *to* DUMNORIX.

May I demand, illustrious Trinobantian,
Why must we fall, because uncertain war
Hath made us captives.

DUMNORIX.

If in open battle
With gen'rous valour to have fac'd our arms
Were all our charge against thee, thou mightst rest
Secure of life; but leading thee to die
Is execution on a gen'ral robber.

ÆNOBARBUS *to* FLAMINIUS.

And dost thou meanly sue to these barbarians?

FLAMINIUS *to* DUMNORIX.

Though our rapacious countrymen have drawn
Your just resentment, we are guiltless both.

BOADICIA *to* FLAMINIUS.

So are ten thousand infants, whom the name,
The single name of Roman shall condemn,
Like thee, to perish by th' unsparing sword.

FLAMINIUS.

Yet more than guiltless, we may plead desert
With Boadicia.

BOADICIA.

Insolent pretension!

A Roman plead desert with Boadicia!
This shall enlarge the portion of thy suff'rings;
For this not only shall thy blood embrue
Andate's shrine but torture shall be added,
And fury wanton in thy various pains.

ÆNOBARBUS *to* BOADICIA.

Produce thy tortures, them and thee we scorn.

TENANTIUS *to the* TRINOBANTIANs.

Fall back with rev'rence, Trinobantian soldiers.
See, who advances from your gen'ral's tent.

SCENE

SCENE *the Fourth.*

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBIANTIAN, ÆNOBARBUS, FLAMINIUS, and VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Victorious sister, may th' unresting labour
Of fortune weave new honours to adorn thee,
And Dumnorix, thy colleague, and my lord;
But if amid these warlike consultations,
Ere yet the order'd pomp of battle moves,
A supplicating sound may reach thy ear,
Stoop from thy glory to an act of mercy.
Thy doom pronounc'd on these unhappy captives —

BOADICIA.

Ha!

VENUSIA.

Their deservings, and thy daughter's pray'r,
Mix'd with my own compassion, from the tent
Have call'd me forth a suitor to thy pity,
That thou would'st hear and spare them.

BOADICIA.

Spare these captives?

DUMNORIX.

Why this request, Venusia?

VENUSIA.

Give them hearing.

They can unfold a story, which demands
Your whole attention.

DUMNORIX.

Let us hear. Proceed. [*To Flam.*

FLAMINIUS.

The Romans' late injustice we abhorr'd,
Nor join'd the band of spoilers. In that season
We chanc'd one day to wander through the forest,
Which parts our confines from th' Icenian land.

We

We found a beauteous virgin in our way.

BOADICIA.

Wretch, dost thou hope to barter with our sister
For thy base life?

FLAMINIUS.

I fear not death, O queen;
But dread dishonour ev'n among my foes.

ÆNOBARBUS to FLAMINIUS.

Death is thy terrour; reason else would teach thee,
No gratitude with cruelty can dwell.

FLAMINIUS.

Deep in that wood we met the lovely maid,
Chac'd by a brutal soldier. At our threats
He soon retreated. To our home we led her,
From insult guarded, sent her back with honour,
Nor was she less than Boadicia's daughter.

VENUSIA.

Now, dearest sister, whose successful standard
Not valour more, than equity upholds;
And thou, my husband, who dost rise in arms
Oppressive deeds in others to chastise;
From your own guiding justice will you stray,
And blend deservers with the herd of guilt?

DUMNORIX.

And are you Romans? Yes, we will, Venusia,
Repay their worthy deed. Strike off their fetters.

BOADICIA.

What do I hear? A British chief's command?
Whoe'er unchains a Roman, on mankind
Lets loose oppression, insolence and rapine;
Sets treason, falsehood, vice, and murder free.

VENUSIA.

Yet these preserv'd thy Emmeline from shame.

BOADICIA.

Not less the victim of eternal shame,
Was she conducted to their hateful mansion;
To guard her honour, and be less, than ruffians,

Had been repugnant to their name and race ;
 But fear of me compell'd them to release her.
 Then shall two Romans nurs'd in fraud and falshood;
 From childhood train'd to each flagitious deed,
 By colour'd pleas to shun the fate, they merit,
 Here find regard against the thousand mouths
 Of Boadicia's suff'rings ? No, this moment
 Shall they expire in torture.

VENUSIA.

Yet reflect.

Of all the paths, which lead to human bliss,
 The most secure and grateful to our steps
 With mercy and humanity is mark'd.
 The sweet-tongu'd rumour of a gracious deed
 Can charm from hostile hands th' uplifted blade,
 The gall of anger into milk transform,
 And dress the brows of enmity in smiles.

BOADICIA.

Still dost thou dare, Venusia ———.

DUMNORIX.

Gently, sister.

And trust me, these resemble virtuous men.

BOADICIA.

Was not I virtuous, whom the Romans lash'd ?
 Were not my violated children virtuous ?
 Bear them this instant to the fiercest rack ;
 And while their trembling limbs are strain'd with torture,
 While thro' the cruel agony of pain
 The bloody drops bedew their shiv'ring cheeks,
 Tell them, how gentle are the pangs, they feel
 To those the soul of Boadicia prov'd,
 When Roman rage her naked limbs expos'd,
 And mark'd her flesh with ever-during shame.

DUMNORIX *to the Britons.*

Withhold your Hands.

BOADICIA.

What means the Trinobantian ?

C

DUM-

B O A D I C I A,

DUMNORIX.

To save thy benefactors and proclaim,
 Whate'er by valour we extort from fortune,
 We yet deserve by justice.

BOADICIA.

To contend

With Boadicia, and protect her foes
 Did she awaken thy ignoble sloth,
 Which else without resentment of thy wrongs
 Had slept obscure at home.

DUMNORIX.

Forbear. Be calm.

BOADICIA.

Yes, under bondage thou hadst tamely bow'd,
 Had not I fir'd thy slow inactive soul.

DUMNORIX.

Not with unbridled passion I confess,
 I wield the sword and mount the warlike car.
 With careful eyes I view'd our suff'ring isle,
 And meditated calmly to avenge her.
 Unmov'd by rage, my soul maintains her purpose
 Through one unalter'd course; and oft before
 As I have guided thy unruly spirit,
 Against its wildness will I now protect thee,
 And from a base, inhuman action save thee.

BOADICIA.

Thy boasted calmness is the child of fear;
 Thou tremblest to exasperate the foe.

Well was it, Britons, in our former conquests,
 That I presid'd o'er the scene of slaughter;
 Else had those thousands of the Roman youth,
 Whose bodies lie extended on our fields,
 Stood at this hour a threatening host against you.
 Come then, ye warriors, follow your conductress,
 And drag these slaves to death.

DUMNORIX.

They will not move,
 Fix'd with amazement at thy matchless frenzy.

Do

Do thou revere these warriors, who with scorn
Observe thy folly.

VENUSIA.

Husband, sister, hear!
Oh! if my humbled voice, my prostrate limbs,
If tears and sighs of anguish may atone
For this pernicious discord, I have rais'd ———

BOADICIA to VENUSIA.

Hence with thy despicable sighs and tears.

[To Dumnorix,

And, thou presumptuous, what invidious power,
Foe to thy safety, animates thy pride
Still to contend with Boadicia's wrath?

DUMNORIX.

No, by Andate, I contend not with thee.
At this important season, when the foldier
Thirsts for the conflict, it would ill become me
To trifle here in discord with a woman.
Nay do not swell that haughty breast in vain.
When once the sacred evidence of justice
Illuminates my bosom, on a rock,
Which neither tears can soften, nor the gusts
Of passion move, my resolution stands.

BOADICIA.

Now heav'n fulfil my curses on thy head!
May ev'ry purpose of thy soul be frustrate!
May infamy and ruin overtake thee!
May base captivity and chains o'erwhelm thee!
May shameful crimson from thy shoulders start,
Like mine, dishonour'd with the servile scourge!
With pain all shiv'ring, and thy flesh contracting,
Low mayst thou crouch beneath th' expected stroke,
Ev'n from the hands, thou sav'st!

TENANTIUS.

Alas! great princess,
Divert this wrath against th' impending foe,
Whose formidable ranks will soon descend

From yonder hill.

BOADICIA to the Britons.

Ungrateful and perfidious!

Now would I draw my spirit from your camp,
 Leave you with him defenceless and expos'd;
 Then should your shatter'd chariots be o'erthrown,
 Your jav'lines broken, and in hasty flight
 Far from your trembling hands the buckler cast;
 Did not th' insatiate thirst, which burns my soul,
 To empty ev'ry vein of Roman blood,
 Protect you, traitors, from my indignation:
 But, by th' ensanguin'd altars of Andate,
 Thou, Dumnorix, be sure, shall't rue this day,
 For thou henceforward art to me a Roman.

SCENE *the Fifth.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, TENANTIUS, EBRANCUS,
 TRINOBANTIANS, ÆNOBARBUS, and FLAMINIUS.

VENUSIA.

Oh! Dumnorix!

DUMNORIX.

Let not this frantic woman
 Grieve thy mild nature—Romans, cease to fear.
 These are my tents; retire in safety thither.

SCENE *the sixth.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, TENANTIUS, EBRANCUS and
 TRINOBANTIANS.

DUMNORIX to TENANTIUS.

Do thou go forth this instant, and command
 Each ardent youth to gird his falchion round him,
 His pond'rous spear to loosen from the tuis,
 And brace the target firmly on his arm.

His

His car let ev'ry charioteer prepare,
 His warlike feat each combatant assume,
 That ev'ry banner may in battle wave,
 Ere the sun reaches his meridian height.

S C E N E *the seventh.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, EBRANCUS, and TRINO-
 BANTIANS.

VENUSIA.

My lord and husband!

DUMNORIX.

Wherefore dost thou hold me,
 And in my passage thy endearments plant.
 I must prepare this moment to confront
 The foul and ghastly face of cruel war;
 And, by the gods, I rather court at present
 That shape of horror, than thy beauteous form:
 Then go, thou dear intruder, and remove
 Thy softness from me.

VENUSIA.

I will stay no longer,
 Than brave Tenantius hath perform'd thy orders.
 Long have I known thy valour skill'd to throw
 The rapid dart, and lift th' unconquer'd shield.
 A confidence, like this, hath still diffus'd
 Enough of firmness thro' my woman's heart
 Ne'er to molest thee with a woman's fears,
 This day excepted; now my weakness governs,
 And terror too importunate will speak.
 Hast thou encounter'd yet such mighty powers,
 As down that mountain suddenly will rush;
 From ev'ry part the Romans are assembled,
 All vers'd in arms, and terrible in valour.

DUMNORIX.

Tell me, thou lovely coward, am not I

As

As terrible ? or falls the Roman sword
 On the tough buckler, and the crested helm
 With deadlier weight, than mine ? away and fear not ;
 Secure and calm, repose thee in thy tent ;
 Think on thy husband, and believe, he conquers ;
 Amid the rage of battle he will think
 On thee ; for thee he draws the martial blade ;
 For thy lov'd infants gripes the pointed ash.
 Go, and expect me to return victorious ;
 Thy hand shall dress my wounds, and all be well.

VENUSIA.

Far better be our fortune, than for thee
 To want that office from my faithful hand,
 Or me to stain thy triumphs with my tears.

DUMNORIX.

Fear not. I tell thee, when thou seest my limbs
 With dust bespread, my brows with glorious sweat,
 And some distinguish'd wound to grace my breast,
 Thou in the fulness of thy love shalt view me,
 And swear, I seem most comely in thy sight.
 Thy virtue then shall shew me worthier of thee,
 Than did thy fondness on our nuptial day.

VENUSIA.

It shall be so. All wounded thou shalt find
 My heart prepar'd to stifle its regret,
 And smooth my forehead with obedient calmness.
 Yet hear me further ; something will I offer
 More, than the weak effects of female dread ;
 Thou go'st to fight in discord with thy colleague :
 It is a thought, which multiplies my fears.

DUMNORIX.

Well urg'd, thou dearest counsellor, who best
 Canst heal this mischief. Let thy meekness try
 The soft persuasion of a private conf'rence
 To win from error a bewilder'd sister,
 While none are present to alarm her pride.

VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

I go, but trembling doubt my vain attempt ;
 Unless, commissioned with thy dear injunctions,
 My soul, exerted to perform thy pleasure,
 Could give persuasion all my force of duty.

SCENE *the eighth.*

DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, TRINOBANTIANS, *and*
 TENANTIUS.

DUMNORIX.

Hark ! we are summon'd.

TENANTIUS.

Ev'ry band is form'd.

The Romans too in close arrangement stand.

DUMNORIX.

You, warriors, destin'd to begin the onset,
 My Trinobantians, it is time to seek
 Th'embattled foe. And you, all-judging gods,
 Look down benignant on a righteous cause !
 Indeed we cannot give you, like the Romans,
 A proud and sumptuous off'ring ; we abound not
 In marble temples, or in splendid altars :
 Yet though we want this vain, luxurious pomp,
 Rough though we wander on the mountain's head,
 Through the deep vale, and o'er the craggy rock,
 We still demand your favour ; we can shew
 Hands, which for justice draw th'avenging steel,
 Firm hearts, and manners undebas'd by fraud.
 To you, my dauntless friends, what need of words ?
 Your cities have been sack'd, your children slain,
 Your wives dishonour'd ; lo ! on yonder hills
 You see the spoilers ; there the ruffians stand :
 Your hands are arm'd ; then follow, and revenge.

End of the first Act.



A C T II.

SCENE *the First.*

FLAMINIUS and ÆNOBARBUS.

FLAMINIUS.

HO ! Ænobarbus, thou mayst now come forward.
What has thy angry soul been brooding o'er ?

ÆNOBARBUS.

Well, thou hast su'd, and hast obtain'd thy suit ;
Of these Barbarians meanly hast implor'd
Thy wretched life, and hast it. Must I thank thee
For this uncommon privilege to stand
A tame spectator of the Roman shame,
To see exulting savages o'erturn
Our walls and ramparts, see them with the spoils
Of our waste dwellings, with our captive eagles,
And ancient trophies, ravish'd from our temples,
March in rude triumph o'er the gods of Rome ?

FLAMINIUS.

What, thou hadst rather die ?

ÆNOBARBUS.

And thou hadst rather
Live, like a dog, in chains, than die with courage,
Thou most unworthy of the Roman name.

FLAMINIUS.

Did those, who now inhabit Rome, deserve

The

The name of Romans? did the ancient spirit
 Of our forefathers still survive among us,
 I should applaud this bold contempt of life.
 Our ancestors, who liv'd, while *Rome* was free,
 Might well prefer a noble fate to chains;
 They lost a blessing, we have never known;
 Born and inur'd to servitude at home,
 We only change one master for another,
 And Dumnorix is far beyond a Nero.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Meanst thou to mock me?

FLAMINIUS.

No, I mean to shew,
 Thy stern opinions suit not with the times.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Still by our valour we control the world,
 And in that duty will I match the foremost.
 If our forefathers' manners be neglected,
 Free from that blame, I singly will maintain them.
 My sentiments are moulded by my spirit,
 Which wants thy pliant qualities to yield
 With ev'ry gust of fortune rude, or mild,
 And crouch beneath example base, or worthy.

FLAMINIUS.

Well, if thou canst not brook a British master—

ÆNOBARBUS.

No, nor thy wanton folly will I brook,
 Which sports alike with slavery, or freedom,
 Insensible of shame.

FLAMINIUS

Suppose, I free thee.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Free me?

FLAMINIUS:

This day, if fortune be propitious.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Ha! do not cheat me with delusive fables,

D

And

And trifle with my bonds.

FLAMINIUS.

By all my hopes,

I do not trifle.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Wilt thou give my bosom

Once more to buckle on the soldier's harness,

And meet in battle our insulting foes ?

Shall my keen falchion gore the flying rout,

And raise a bleeding trophy to revenge

For each indignity, which Rome hath borne ?

Hold me no longer in suspense ; instruct me,

From whence these hopes proceed.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou know'st, I lov'd

The British princess.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Hast thou rais'd my hopes.

To freedom, future victory and honour,

And dost thou talk of love ?

FLAMINIUS.

That love shall save us.

Thou saw'st, the gentle Emmeline but now

Stole to our tent, and gave her tend'rest welcome.

Unchang'd I found her, soft and artless still.

The gen'rous maid already hath suggested

The means of flight. The battle once begun,

While ev'ry Briton is intent on war,

Herself will guide us to a place of safety.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Now I commend thee.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou approv'st then.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Ay.

FLAMINIUS.

And see, the joyful moment is approaching ;

See,

See, where th'unnumber'd Trinobantians spread
 In rude disorder o'er the vale beneath,
 Whose broad extent this eminence commands.
 Mark their wide-waving multitude, confus'd
 With mingling standards, and tumultuous cars :
 But far superior to the rest behold,
 The brave and gen'rous Dumnorix, erect
 With eager hope, his lofty jav'lin shakes,
 And with unpolish'd majesty adorns
 The front of war.

ÆNOBARBUS.

I mark the rabble well ;
 And soon shall view the Romans from their station
 Between those woods, which shade the adverse hills,
 Sweep with resistless ardour to the vale,
 And trample o'er the savages, like dust.

FLAMINIUS.

That smiling vale with pity I contemplate,
 And wish, more gentle foot-steps might be seen
 To press its verdure, and that softer notes,
 Than war's terrific clamours, might be tun'd
 From those surrounding shades to join the murmurs
 Of that fair channel, whose sonorous bed
 Receives the stream, descending from this grove
 To form the limpid maze, which shines below.

ÆNOBARBUS.

I see it glist'ning in the noon-day sun.
 But British gore will change its glassy hue.

FLAMINIUS.

Oh ! might we rather on its friendly banks
 Erect a grateful monument to peace ;
 That she, her sway resuming, might afford me
 To clasp the gallant Dumnorix, and stile him
 My friend, my benefactor, and preserver —
 Stand from before this tempest, while it passes.

SCENE *the second.*

BOADICIA, ICENIANS, ÆNOBARBUS and FLAMINIUS *at a distance.*

BOADICIA.

Oh! I could drive this jav'lin thro' my heart
To ease its tortures. Disobey'd! Controll'd!
Ev'n in my army's fight! Malignant pow'rs,
If such there be, who o'er revenge preside,
Who steel the breast with ever-during hate,
And aid black rancour in its purpos'd mischief,
Be present now, and guide my indignation!

[*pauses*]

The Trinobantians are advanc'd before me.
Let them sustain the onset; let the Romans
On Dumnorix with ev'ry cohort press,
Till he entreat for Boadicia's aid:
Then shall my eager eyes enjoy his ruin;
And when th'insulting boaster is o'erthrown,
His bands dispers'd, or gasping in the dust,
Then will I rush exulting in my car,
Like fierce Andatè, on the weary'd foe
Lead rout and slaughter, thro' a tide of gore
Impel my clotted wheels, redeem the day,
And from the mouth of danger snatching conquest,
Crown my revenge with glory.

SCENE *the third.*

BOADICIA, ICENIANS, ÆNOBARBUS and FLAMINIUS *at a distance, and VENUSIA.*

VENUSIA.

Stand apart
At my request, Icenians, O unbend, [To Boad.
That

That louring brow, and hear a suppliant sister !
 So prone to errour is our mortal frame,
 Time could not step without a trace of horror,
 If wary nature on the human heart
 Amid its wild variety of passions
 Had not impress'd a soft and yielding sense,
 That when offences give resentment birth,
 The kindly dews of penitence may raise
 The seeds of mutual mercy and forgiveness.

BOADICIA.

Weak wretch, and yet whose impotence aspires
 To mix in warlike councils, and determine
 The fate of captives, won in fields of death,
 Thou wouldst do better to reserve thy tears ;
 Thou shalt't have cause for penitential torrents.

VENUSIA.

They will not wait a second birth of woe ;
 At thy severity they burst already.
 Why turns on me that formidable aspect,
 Wont with commanding sternness to behold
 Its foes abash'd, and victory its vassal ?
 Yet how much brighter is the wreath of glory,
 When interwove with clemency and justice.
 Thou go'st to battle, there obtain renown ;
 But learn compassion from my tears, nor think,
 Benignity enfeebles, or dishonours
 The most exalted valour.

BOADICIA.

Shall the tears

Of abject importunity detain me,
 While vengeance, striding from his grisly den,
 With fell impatience grinds his iron teeth,
 And waits my nod to satisfy his hunger.
 Hence to th' employment of thy feeble distaff.

VENUSIA.

Not skill'd, like thee, in war's ennobling toils,
 Inferiour praise, and humbler tasks I court,
 And own my safety in thy loftier virtues ;

Yet

Yet not like thee, with unforgiving wrath,
 Could I resign a sister to her grief
 At this tremendous hour, so near deciding
 The fate of both. One gentle word bestow,
 And I will leave thee with obedient haste;
 Nay I will seek the altars, and request,
 That in the future triumphs of this day
 Heav'n may refuse to Dumnorix a share,
 And give thee all.

BOADICIA.

Does Dumnorix consent

To sacrifice the Romans? art thou mute?
 Still does he brave me? but your favour'd captives
 Shall not escape. They soon shall join the victims,
 Which this unconquer'd jav'lin shall reserve
 To solemnize the fall of Rome's dominion.
 Then to my glory Dumnorix shall bend.
 In sight of Britain shall his baffled pride
 The pomp of public sacrifice behold,
 Behold and pine. You take a band of soldiers;

[To an Icenian,

Watch well around the Trinobantian tents,
 And guard these Romans, as your lives. I tell thee,

[To Venus,

Their gore shall yet besmear Andate's altar.

VENUSIA.

In silent awe I heard thy first resentment,
 Yet hop'd the well known accents of affection,
 In kindness whisper'd to thy secret ear,
 Might to thy breast recal its exil'd pity,
 That gentle inmate of a woman's heart.

BOADICIA.

Durst thou, presumptuous, entertain a thought
 To give this bosom, nerv'd with manly strength,
 The weak sensations of a female spirit?

VENUSIA.

When I remind thy elevated soul,

That

That we by mutual interests are but one,
 And by th' indissoluble ties of birth,
 Are those sensations weak, which nature prompts?
 With justice strengthen'd, can her pow'ful voice
 Find no persuasion.—

BOADICIA.

None. Provoke no more
 With plaintive murmurs my indignant ear.
 Thou, and thy husband, authors of my shame
 Before th' assembled chiefs, may rest assur'd,
 No prayers shall soften, no atonement bribe,
 And no submission shall appease the wrong.
 May desolation trample on my dwelling
 A second time, rapacious force again,
 And insult revel through my inmost chambers,
 If I forgive you. Thou hast food for anguish;
 Go, and indulge its appetite at leisure.

VENUSIA.

Yes, I will hasten to the holy shrine,
 There wring my hands, and melt in copious sorrow
 Not for my injur'd self, but thee remorseless,
 To mourn thy faded honours, which, deform'd
 By harsh injustice to thy blameless friends,
 Ne'er will revive in beauty. Not success,
 Not trophies rising round thee; not the throng
 Of circling captives, and their conquer'd standards,
 Nor glorious dust of victory can hide
 From just reproach thy unrelenting scorn,
 While none deplore thee, but the wrong'd Venusia.

SCENE *the fourth.*

BOADICIA, ICENIANS, ÆNOBAREBUS *and* FLAMINIUS *at a distance.*

BOADICIA.

Stern pow'r of war, my patroness and guide,

To

To thee each captive Roman I devote.
 Come then, vindictive goddess in thy terrors;
 O'erwhelm with wrath his sacrilegious head,
 Who would defraud thy altars: O confound
 His ranks, his steeds, his chariots, and thy favour
 To me, thy martial votarefs, confine,
 In sex, like thee, and glowing with thy fires.

SCENE *the fifth.*

ÆNOBARBUS and FLAMINIUS.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Do thou come forward now, and say, what terrors
 Has thy dejected soul been brooding o'er?
 Yon furious dame, who fill'd thee so with dread,
 Is marching onward. Raise thy head, and look.
 See, where ev'n now with sullen pride she mounts
 Her martial seat; yet wondrous slow, by heav'n,
 Her car descends, nor soon will reach the vale.
 Thou lookst desponding. Art thou still dismay'd?
 Thinkst thou, yon dreadful woman will return?
 From us she moves, though slowly; then take comfort.

FLAMINIUS.

Far other cares, than terror, fill my breast.

ÆNOBARBUS.

What means this languor? Wherefore heaves that sigh?

FLAMINIUS.

O Ænobarbus, wilt thou bear my weakness;
 I see the moment of deliverance near,
 Yet pine with grief.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Whate'er the folly be,
 With which thy bosom teems, the gods confound it.

FLAMINIUS.

To see the dearest object of my soul,
 Just see hereafter such a tedious absence,

Then

Then vanish from her sight perhaps for ever,
 When these reflections rise, the sweet exchange
 From bonds to freedom, which to her I owe,
 Is mix'd with bitterness, and joy subsides.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Why didst thou leave the fair Italian fields,
 Thou silken slave of Venus? what could move
 Thee to explore these boist'rous northern climes,
 And change yon radiant sky for Britain's clouds?
 What dost thou here, effeminate? by heav'n
 Thou shouldst have loiter'd in Campania's villas
 And in thy garden nurs'd with careful hands
 The gaudy-vested progeny of Flora;
 Or indolently pac'd the pebbled shore,
 And ey'd the beating of the Tuscan wave
 To waste thy irksome leisure. Will't thou tell me,
 What thou dost here in Britain? dost thou come
 To sigh and pine? could Italy afford
 No food for these weak passions? must thou traverse
 Such tracts of land, and visit this cold region
 To love and languish? answer me, what motive
 First brought thee hither? but forbear to urge,
 It was in quest of honour; for the god
 Of war disclaims thee.

FLAMINIUS.

Well, suppose, I answer,
 That friendship drew me from the golden Tiber,
 With thee to combat this inclement sky,
 Will it offend thee?

ÆNOBARBUS.

No, I am thy friend,
 And I will make a Roman of thee still;
 But let me see no languishing dejection
 More on thy brow, nor hear unmanly sighs.
 Gods! canst thou dream of love? When yonder see,
 The Roman legions, all array'd for battle,
 Are now descending; see their dreaded eagles,

E

Their dazzling helmets, and their crimson plumes:
 A grove of jav'lines glitters down the steep;
 They point their terrors on th' astonish'd see;
 Soon will they charge the Britons in the vale,
 And with th' auspicious glories of this day
 Enrich the annals of imperial Rome.

O curst captivity! with double weight
 I feel thee now! malicious fate! to suffer
 A Roman thus to stand confin'd in bondage,
 And see the triumphs, which he cannot share.
 By heav'n, Flaminius, I will never bear it.
 Where is thy Briton? Will she lead us hence?
 Elf, by the god of war, unarm'd I rush
 To join the glorious scene, which opens there.

FLAMINIUS.

I see her coming, and will fly to meet her.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Our time is short, remember; do not dally.

SCENE *the sixth.*

ÆNOBARBUS.

I have a thought, lyes rip'ning in my breast,
 And teems with future glory, if the fight
 Prove undecisive, and these tents subsist.
 Soon will I bid thee, hostile camp, farewell.
 Thou saw'st me come in thraldom; I depart
 A fugitive: if ever I return,
 Thou shalt receive me in another guise;
 Then shalt thou feel me; when my shining helm
 Shall strike cold terror through thy boldest guards,
 And from its lofty crest destruction shake.

End of the second Act.



A C T III.

SCENE *the first,*FLAMINIUS *and* ÆNOBARBUS.

FLAMINIUS.

O UR lovely guide attends us. Thy impatience
Hath call'd me loit' rer.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Thou mayst loiter still.
Thou canst not hasten, nor retard our fate,
Which is irrevocably fix'd.

FLAMINIUS.

What say'st thou?

ÆNOBARBUS.

I say, prepare to die. If Boadicia
Return once more, our destiny is fix'd.
Whate'er her merciless revenge may purpose,
Elate with conquest, or incens'd by loss,
If on the rack to strain our bursting sinews,
If from the bleeding trunks to lop our limbs,
Or with slow fires protract the hours of pain,
We must abide it all. Collect thy spirit,
And, like a Roman, dauntless wait thy doom.

E 2

FLA-

FLAMINIUS.

I hear thee, but thy meaning——

ÆNOBARBUS.

Hear again.

Before the tent some paces as I stood,
 And joyful saw the Trinobantian guard,
 Of us neglectful, from this quarter drawn
 To view th'impending battle; on a sudden
 A curs'd Icenian cast his jealous eye
 Athwart my steps, then call'd a num'rous band,
 Who prowl around us, as a destin'd prey.

FLAMINIUS.

Malicious fortune!

ÆNOBARBUS.

Now thou seest my meaning.

FLAMINIUS.

Our flight were vain, while these observe us.

ÆNOBARBUS.

True.

What has thy tame submission now avail'd,
 Thy abject supplication to barbarians?
 Hadst thou with courage met thy fate at first,
 We had been dead, ere now.

FLAMINIUS.

To view the sun
 Thro' his gay progress from the morn, till even,
 Possess my friends, my parents, and my love
 Within the circle of my native walls
 Were joys, I deem'd well worthy of my care;—
 But since that care is fruitless, I can leave
 This light, my friends, my parents, love, and country,
 As little daunted at my fate, as thou,
 Tho' not so unconcern'd.

ÆNOBARBUS.

O Mars and Vesta!

Is it a vision, which you raise before me
 To charm my eyes? Behold a scene, Flaminius,

Te

To cheer a Roman in the gasp of death.
 The Britons are defeated ; look, Flaminius ;
 Back from the vale in wild tumultuous flight
 Behold their numbers sweeping tow'rd the hill ;
 Already some are swarming up its side
 To reach their camp for shelter ; pale dismay
 With hostile rage pursue their broken rear,
 While massacre, unchidden, cloy's his famine,
 And quaffs the blood of nations. O in vain
 Dost thou oppose thy bosom to the tide
 Of war, and brandish that recover'd standard ;
 Vain is thy animating voice to those,
 Whom fear makes deaf ; O Dumnorix, thy toils
 Are fruitless, Britain in the scale of fate
 Yields to the weight of Rome. Now, life, farewell :
 Shine on, bright Phœbus, those, who rest behind
 To share thy splendours, while I sink in darkness,
 Are far beneath my envy ; I resign
 These eyes with pleasure to eternal shades,
 They now have seen enough.

FLAMINIUS.

Whence this despair ?

A blind confusion fills the spacious camp.
 Already consternation hath dispers'd
 Our guard. Ev'n Dumnorix retires — He comes ;
 Avoid him — Trust me, I am well instructed,
 And will conduct thee to a safe retreat

SCENE *the second.*

DUMNORIX *with a standard.*

Thou hard-kept remnant of our shatter'd fortune,
 Stand there before the partial eye of heav'n,
 Which has preferr'd the Romans' splendid altars,
 To the plain virtue of a British heart.
 Presumptuous frenzy ! Why is heav'n reproach'd ?
 O Boadicia, thou perfidious mischief !

SCENE

SCENE *the third.*DUMNORIX *and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Now let my duty o'er my fear prevail,
 Fill my whole breast with tenderness, and heal
 With sweetest comfort thy distress.

DUMNORIX.

My wife!
 Thou most unlike to yon degen'rate woman,
 Her country's bane!

VENUSIA.

I tremble at thy words.

DUMNORIX.

Be not dismay'd; the camp is still our own.
 Night is impending, and the Romans halt.

VENUSIA.

But what of Boadicia?

DUMNORIX.

Hear and mourn.
 The Trinobantians scarce had fill'd the vale,
 When from a narrow pass between the woods
 Forth burst the Romans, wedg'd in deep array.
 I found our struggle vain, and sent for aid
 To Boadicia; she with scorn reply'd,
 I did not want th' assistance of a woman;
 Nor left her station, till my broken ranks
 Were driv'n among th' Icenians: in a moment
 All was confusion, slaughter and defeat.

SCENE *the fourth.*DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, *and* BOADICIA-

DUMNORIX.

Gods! art thou safe?

VENU.

VENUSIA.

Oh ! most unhappy sister !

When last we parted, cruel were thy words,
 A sure presage of endless grief to me ;
 Yet my desponding spirit ne'er foreboded,
 That thou couldst deviate from a prosp'rous course,
 When ev'ry gale conspir'd to swell thy glory.

BOADICIA.

Throw not on me the crime of envious fortune.

DUMNORIX.

Dost thou blame fortune, traitress ?

BOADICIA.

Then the blame

Take on thy single head.

DUMNORIX.

Avoid my sight.

BOADICIA.

Thou ledst the van.

DUMNORIX.

Avaunt.

BOADICIA.

Thou fledst the first,

Now findst too late th'importance of a woman.

DUMNORIX.

Too true I find a woman curs'd with pow'r
 To blast a nation's welfare. Heavenly rulers !
 How have the Britons merited this shame ?
 Have we with fell ambition, like the Romans,
 Unpeopled realms, and made the world a desert ?
 Have we your works defac'd ; or how deserv'd
 So large a measure of your bitt'rest wrath,
 That you should cloath this spirit of a wolf
 In human form, and blend her lot with ours ?

BOADICIA.

Beset with perils, as I am, pursu'd
 By rout and havoc to th'encirc'ling toyl ;
 Untam'd by this reverse, my lofty soul,

Up.

Upbraiding still thy arrogance, demands,
 Who spar'd the captive Romans ? Who provok'd
 My just resentment ? Who, in pow'r, in name
 And dignity inferior, but elate
 With blind presumption, and by envy stung,
 Dar'd to dispute with me supreme command,
 Then pale and trembling turn'd his back on danger ?

VENUSIA.

O once united by the friendliest ties,
 And leaders both of nations, shall this land
 Still view its bulwarks, tott'ring with disunion,
 Enhance the public and their own misfortunes ?
 Thou, my complacent lord, wert wont to smooth
 That manly front at pity's just complaint ;
 And, thou entrusted with a people's welfare,
 A queen and warrior, let disdain no more
 Live in the midst of danger — see Venusia
 Upon her knees ———

DUMNORIX.

Shall thy perfections kneel
 To this———

VENUSIA.

Oh ! stop, nor give resentment utt'rance.
 In such a cause the proudest knee might sue
 To less, than Boadicia——Turn not from me

[To Boadicia

Look on a prostrate sister ! Think, thou hear'st
 Our children's plaintive notes enforce my pray'r,
 And Albion's genius mix his solemn moan ;
 That lamentations through thy ears resound
 From all the wives and mothers of those thousands,
 Whose limbs lie stretch'd on yonder fields of death ;
 Those wretched wives and mothers, oh ! reflect,
 But for the fatal discord of this day
 With other looks, with other cries and gestures,
 With different transports, and with different tears

Might

Might have receiv'd their sons and husbands home,
 Than they will now survey their pale remains,
 Which there lye mangled by the Roman sword
 To feed the raven's hunger — yet relent!
 Yet let restoring union close our wounds,
 And to repair this ruin be thy praise!

DUMNORIX..

Rise, rise. Thy mildness, whose persuasive charm
 No cruelty, but hers, could hear unmov'd,
 In vain would render placable and wise
 That malice, inhumanity and frenzy,
 Which have already wasted such a store
 Of glory and success.

BOADICIA.

Oh!

DUMNORIX.

Dost thou groan?

BOADICIA.

No, no, I do not feel a moment's pain.

DUMNORIX.

Thy words are false. Thy heart o'erflows with anguish.

BOADICIA.

No, I despise both thee and fortune still.

DUMNORIX.

By heav'n, I know distraction rends thy soul,
 And to its view presents th' approaching scene
 Of shame and torture, when th' indignant Romans
 Exact a tenfold vengeance for their suff'rings;
 And when thou passest through their streets in chains,
 The just derision of insulting foes,
 A frantic woman, who resign'd her hopes,
 And to indulge an empty pride betray'd
 Her children, friends and country; then recal,
 What once was Boadicia, fall'n how low
 From all her honours, by her folly fall'n
 From pow'r, from empire, victory and glory
 To vilest bonds, and ignominious stripes.

F

BOA-

BOADICIA.

May curses blast thee, worse, than I can utter,
And keener pangs, than whips, or shackles seize thee!

VENUSIA.

Oh! sister, how unseemly is this rage.
Whom dost thou load with these ungen'rous curses?
Thy faithful friend, thy counsellour and brother,
Whom thou hast injur'd, injur'd past the pow'r
Of reparation. Dost thou call for whips
To print those venerable limbs with shame,
For bonds to humble that majestic head,
Which foes themselves must honour? yet, if chains
Must be our fate, what cruel hand hath forg'd them,
But thine alone? thy hand hath heap'd destruction
On him, thy once rever'd ally, on me,
On my poor children, guiltless of offence,
And on thy own, who claim'd protection from thee;
Yet thou obdurate, to thy rage a prey,
Dost chide remorse and pity from thy breast.

DUMNORIX to BOADICIA.

Source of thy own afflictions! to behold thee
Distracted thus, thus fall'n and lost, to see
Thus strongly painted on thy lab'ring features
The pangs, thou feel'st within, awakes compassion.

BOADICIA.

Ha! no———divine Andate shall uphold me
Above thy pity. Think'st thou, Boadicia
Is thus deserted by her patron goddess,
Thus void of all resources? think so still,
And be deceiv'd. Ev'n now I feel her aid; [*aside.*]
I feel her here; the warlike queen inspires
My pregnant soul; the mighty plan is forming;
It grows, it labours in my ardent bosom;
It springs to life, and calls for instant action;
Lead on, exert thee, goddess, till the furies,
Which heretofore have thunder'd at thy heels,
Start at the new-born horrors of this night.

SCENE

SCENE *the fifth.*DUMNORIX *and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Oh! Dumnorix, how virtue hath recoil'd
Upon itself! my interposing pity,
Thy manly firmness in a gen'rous act
Gave these disasters being.

DUMNORIX.

I forbid thee
To blame thy virtues, which the gods approve,
And I revere: Now leave me to concert
With our surviving chiefs the means of safety.

VENUSIA.

Oh! that, like me, compliant, at thy word
Peace a benign companion would attend,
And moderate thy cares, while I depart.

SCENE *the sixth.*

DUMNORIX.

Have I been guilty? answer me, my heart,
Who now wouldst burst my agonizing breast,
Hath Dumnorix been guilty? wilt thou, Britain,
To me impute the horrors of this day?
Perhaps a Roman's policy had yielded,
And to a colleague's cruelty and pride
Had sacrific'd humanity and justice;
I did not so, and Albion is destroy'd.
Yet, O be witness, all ye gen'rous spirits,
So lately breathing in those heaps of death,
That in this day's extremity and peril
Your Dumnorix was mindful of his charge;
My shiver'd javelin, my divided shield,
And blunted sword, be witness for your master,

You were not idle in that dreadful hour:
Nor ev'n amid the carnage pil'd around me,
Will I relinquish my pursuit of hope——
Hope may forsake me——For myself I fear not——
But my Venusia —— Ha! prepare, my soul ——
There is thy struggle, on her tender mind
To graft thy firmness, which can welcome death,
And hold it gain, when liberty is lost.

End of the third Act.



ACT



A C T IV.

SCENE *the First.*

DUMNORIX.

TILL good Tenantius, and the rest return,
 I have been led by solitary care
 To yon dark branches, spreading o'er the brook,
 Which murmurs through the camp; this mighty camp,
 Where once two hundred thousand sons of war
 With restless dins awak'd the midnight hour.
 Now horrid stillness in the vacant tents
 Sits undisturb'd; and these incessant rills,
 Whose pebbled channel breaks their shallow stream,
 Fill with their melancholly sound my ears,
 As if I wander'd, like a lonely hind,
 O'er some dead fallow far from all resort:
 Unless that ever and anon a groan
 Bursts from a soldier, pillow'd on his shield
 In torment, or expiring with his wounds,
 And turns my fix'd attention into horror.
 Venusia comes——The hideous-scene around me

Now

Now prompts the hard, but necessary duty——
Yet how to name thee, death, without thy terrours!

S C E N E *the second.*

DUMNORIX and VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Thou didst enjoin my absence. I departed.
With ill-tim'd care if now returning——

DUMNORIX.

No.

VENUSIA.

Alas! deep-plung'd in sadness still I find thee.

DUMNORIX.

Dost thou? come nearer. Thou hast seen this day,
How thy perfidious, thy invet'rate sister
Hath stain'd my glory, and my fortune baffled;
Thou hast received me vanquish'd, who before
Was us'd to greet thee with the sound of conquest.
Now tell me truly; am I still the same
In my Venusia's eyes.

VENUSIA.

What means my lord;

DUMNORIX.

Am I still lov'd and honour'd, as before?

VENUSIA.

Canst thou suspect, that fortune rules my love?
Thy pow'r and honours may be snatch'd away,
Thy wide possessions pass to other lords,
And, frowning heav'n resume whate'er it gave,
All but my love, which ne'er shall know decay,
But ev'n in ruin shall augment its fondness.

DUMNORIX.

Then will my dictates be regarded still.

VENUSIA.

Impart this moment thy rever'd commands,

And

And if it prove within my slender pow'r
To ease thy troubles, I will bless the gods,
And unrepining to our fate submit.

DUMNORIX.

Think not, my own calamities distress me ;
I can encounter fortune's keenest malice :
But oh! for thee, Venusia ———

VENUSIA.

Do not fear.

While in these faithful arms I hold my lord,
I never shall complain. Let ev'ry ill,
Let ruin and captivity o'erake me,
With thee I will be happy.

DUMNORIX.

Ha! Venusia!

Could thou and I find happiness together,
Depriv'd of freedom? Dost thou mark?

VENUSIA.

I do.

DUMNORIX.

Thou art most fair; but could thy lovely face
Make slavery look comely? Could the touch
Of that soft hand convey delight to mine
With servile fetters on?

VENUSIA.

Why dost thou gaze
So stedfastly upon me?

DUMNORIX.

I would have thee
Reflect once more upon the loss of freedom.

VENUSIA.

It is the heaviest sure of human woes.

DUMNORIX.

Learn one thing more, and though relentless heav'n
Its care withdraws from this ill-destin'd isle,
Thou in the fall of nations shalt be safe.
Oh! heed Venusia! never did thy welfare

Raise

Raise in my breast such tender cares before ;
 Else from the public danger would I spare
 These precious moments to assist thy virtue.

VENUSIA.

Thou mak'st me all attention.

DUMNORIX.

Reach thy hand.

Now while I hold thee, do I bless Andate,
 That this free hand, protected by my sword,
 Hath not yet known the shameful doom of bondage.

VENUSIA.

Nor shall I know it ; thy unshaken valour
 Will be my safeguard still.

DUMNORIX.

If fate confounds

My utmost efforts, can I then protect thee ?

VENUSIA.

Why dost thou lead me to despair ? Why fill
 My breast with terrors ? Never did I see thee,
 Till this sad hour, thus hopeless and dejected.
 Oh ! how shall I, a woman weak and fearful,
 Sustain my portion of the gen'ral woe ;
 If thou, in perils exercis'd and war,
 Dost to ill fortune bow thy gallant spirit ?

DUMNORIX.

Think not, Venusia, I abandon hope.
 No, on the verge of ruin will I stand,
 And dauntless combat with our evil fate ;
 Nor, till its rancour bear me to the bottom,
 My soul shall ever entertain despair :
 But as the wisest, and the best resolv'd
 Cannot controll the doubtful chance of war,
 I would prepare thee for the worst event.

VENUSIA.

Fly, where thou wilt, my faithful steps shall follow.
 I can pursue thy course with naked feet,
 Though roaming o'er the rough and pointed crags,

Or

Or through the pathless tract of deepest woods;
 By thy dear hand supported, would I pass
 Through the cold snow, which hides the mountain's brow,
 And o'er the frozen surface of the vale.

DUMNORIX.

Thou best of women, I believe thou wouldst,
 Believe, thy constant heart would teach those limbs,
 Thus soft and gentle, to support all hardship,
 And hold with me society in toil.
 But should we want the wretched pow'r to fly,
 What then?

VENUSIA.

What then?

DUMNORIX.

The Romans may surround us:

VENUSIA.

How wouldst thou act in such a dreadful season?

DUMNORIX.

Ne'er shall the hands of Dumnorix endure
 The shame of fetters; ne'er shall Rome behold
 This breast, which honourable war hath seam'd,
 Pant with the load of bondage: gen'rous wounds,
 Ye deep engraven characters of glory,
 Ye faithful monitors of Albion's cause,
 Oft, when your midnight anguish hath rebuk'd
 Oblivious slumber from my watchful pillow,
 And in her danger kept my virtue waking:
 You, when that office can avail no more,
 Will look more graceful on my death-cold bosom,
 Than to be shewn before the scoffing Romans,
 Should they behold that Dumnorix in shackles,
 Whom once they dreaded on the field of war.

VENUSIA.

Assist me heav'n!

DUMNORIX.

Speak out. I watch to hear thee.
 My pow'rs are all suspended with attention,

G

VE-

VENUSIA.

What shall I do ?

DUMNORIX.

Explain thy thoughts.

VENUSIA.

I cannot.

DUMNORIX.

Why canst thou not ? Remember, who thou art,
And who thy husband is.

VENUSIA.

The first of men,

Join'd to the least deserving of her sex.

DUMNORIX.

View thy own heart ; be conscious of thy merit ;
And in its strength confiding, be secure,
That thou art worthy of the greatest man,
And not unequal to the noblest task.

VENUSIA.

O I will struggle to assist that claim !
Yet dearest lord, extend thy whole indulgence,
Nor undeserving of thy love esteem me,
While trembling thus.

DUMNORIX.

I know thy native softness.

Yet wherefore dost thou tremble ? Speak, my love,

VENUSIA.

O I have not thy courage, not been us'd,
Like thee, to meet the dreadful shape of death ;
I never felt the anguish of a wound ;
Thy arm hath still kept danger at a distance :
If now it threatens, and my heart no more
Must treat with safety, it is new to me.

DUMNORIX.

It is, my love. My tenderness implies
No expectation, that thy gentle mind
Should be at once familiariz'd with fate.
Not insurmountable I hold our danger.

But

But to provide against delusive fortune,
That thou mayst bear, untterrify'd, the lot,
Which best shall suit thy dignity and name,
Demands thy care : take counsel of thy virtue.

VENUSIA.

I will.

DUMNORIX.

And arm thy breast with resolution.

VENUSIA.

Indeed I will, and ask the gracious gods
To fill my heart with constancy and spirit,
And shew me worthy of a man, like thee.
Perhaps their succour, thy rever'd injunction,
And high example, may controll my terrors ;
But oh ! what pow'r shall sooth another care,
Than life more precious, and a keener pang,
Than death's severest agony, relieve ;
The sad remembrance of my helpless infants,
Our love's dear pledges, who before me rise
In orphan woe, defenceless and forsaken,
And all my borrow'd fortitude dissolve,

DUMNORIX.

Thou perfect pattern of maternal fondness,
And conjugal compliance, rest assur'd,
That care was never absent from my soul.
Confide in me thy children shall be safe.

VENUSIA.

How safe ?

DUMNORIX.

Shall live in safety: Thou shalt know.
Mean time retire. Our anxious chiefs, return'd,
Wait my commands, and midnight is advancing,

SCENE the third.

DUMNORIX.

She goes ---- her love and duty will surmount

This hideous Task—— O morning bright in hope,
 Clos'd by a night of horreur, which reduces
 This poor——dear woman, yet in blooming years,
 Bless'd in her husband, in her offspring bless'd,
 Perhaps to cut her stem of being short
 With her own tender hand —— If ever tears
 Might sort with valour, nor debase a soldier,
 It would be now—— Ha! whither do I plunge?

S C E N E *the Fourth.*

DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, TENANTIUS and TRINO-
 BANTIANS.

DUMNORIX.

Well, my brave friends, what tidings?

EBRANCUS.

Through thy quarter
 With weary steps, and mourning, have we travers'd
 A silent desert of unpeopled tents
 Quite to the distant station of th' Icenians.
 Their chiefs we found in council round their queen;
 The multitude was arming: twenty thousand
 Were yet remaining, and unhurt by war,
 Unlike our Trinobantians, who, unaided,
 The fatal onset bore. Those huge battalions,
 Which Rome so dreaded, are alas! no more.

DUMNORIX.

Be not dejected. Far the greater part,
 Are fled for shelter to their native roofs,
 And will rejoin us, when with force repair'd
 We may dispute our island still with Rome.
 But have you gain'd access to Boadicia?

EBRANCUS.

We have.

DUMNORIX.

What said she?

EBRAN-

EBRANCUS.

She approv'd thy counsel

DUMNORIX.

You told her then my purpose to retreat
Through yonder forest.

EBRANCUS.

To herself alone

We told it.

DUMNORIX.

I commend you. You have sav'd us
A conference, both needless and unpleasing.

EBRANCUS.

She further bade us note, how all th' Icenians
Were then in arms, and ready to advance.

DUMNORIX.

Return, and tell her, (let thy phrase, Ebrancus,
Be soft and humble) e're two hours be wasted,
We must begin our march. Do you explore [*To the*
other Trinobantians,
The secret passage, and with winged haste
Bring back your tidings. Thou, Tenantius, wait.

SCENE *the fifth.*

DUMNORIX and TENANTIUS.

DUMNORIX.

To thee my inmost bosom I must open,
And to thy friendship trust my tend'rest cares.
Thou must pursue thy journey (heed me well)
Quite through 'the forest— Dost thou know the pass?

TENANTIUS.

Yes, where those gushing waters leave the grove
To seek the valley, deeper in the shade
From the same fountain flows a smaller brook
Whose secret channel through the thicket winds
And will conduct me farther down the vale —

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

Which once attain'd, proceed and gain my dwelling.
 Give me thy honest hand ——— Come nearer, soldier,
 Thy faithful bosom would I clasp to mine——
 Perhaps thy general and thou may never
 Embrace again.

TENANTIUS.

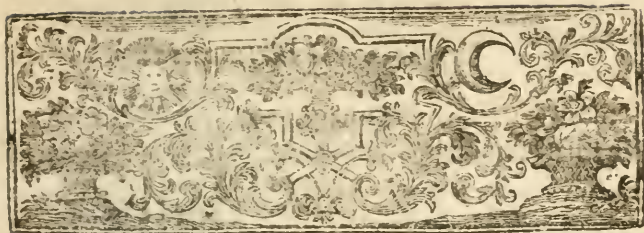
What means my fearless chief?
 Why hast thou call'd this unaccustom'd moisture
 Into thy soldier's eyes?

DUMNORIX.

Thou dost not weep,
 My gallant vet'ran ——— I have been to blame.
 A tenderness, resulting from a care,
 Which struggles here, subdu'd me for a moment.
 This shall be soon discharg'd, and all be well.
 I have two boys—— If after all my efforts
 (I speak not prompted by despair, but caution)
 Rome should prevail against me, and our hopes
 Abortive fall, thou take these helpless infants;
 With thee transport them to our northern frontier,
 And hide them deep in Caledonian woods.
 There in their growing years excite and cherish
 The dear remembrance of their native fields;
 That to redeem them from th' Italian spoiler,
 If e'er some kind occasion should invite,
 Forth from their covert they may spring undaunted,
 Ne'er let the race of Dumnorix divert
 One thought from Albion to their own repose.
 Remind them often of their father's toils,
 Whom thou leav'st grappling to the last with fortune.
 And if beneath this island's mould'ring state
 I to avoid disgraceful chains must sink,
 Fain would my spirit in the hope depart,
 That on the ruins, which surround my fall,
 A new born structure may hereafter stand,
 Rais'd by my virtue, living in my sons.

End of the fourth Act.

ACT



A C T V.

SCENE *the First.*

VENUSIA.

A Hollow sound of tumult strikes my ear ;
 Perhaps the howl of some night-roaming wolves,
 Who, wak'd by hunger, from their gloomy haunts
 Are trooping forth to make their fell repast
 On my fresh bleeding countrymen, whose limbs
 O'erspread the valley. Shall I mourn your fall,
 Lost friends, who, couch'd in death, forget your cares,
 I, who may shortly join your ghastly band,
 Unless that forest yield its friendly aid ?
 O hope, sweet flatt'rer, whose delusive touch
 Sheds on afflicted minds the balm of comfort,
 Relieves the load of poverty, sustains
 The captive, bending with the weight of bonds,
 And smooths the pillow of disease and pain,
 Send back th' exploring messenger with joy,
 And let me hail thee from that friendly grove.

SCENE

SCENE *the second.*

VENUSIA and DUMNORIX.

DUMNORIX.

Why hast thou left thy couch ;

VENUSIA.

I heard a sound,

Like tumult at a distance.

DUMNORIX.

So did I,

As near the op'ning pass I stood to watch
Our messenger's return.SCENE *the third.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, and EBRANCUS.

DUMNORIX to EBRANCUS.

What means this haste ?

Why lookst thou pale ?

EBRANCUS.

With thy instructions charg'd,
 I fought th'Icenian quarter. All around
 Was solitude and silence. When I call'd,
 No voice reply'd. To Boadicia's tent
 With fearful haste I trod. Her daughters there
 I found in consternation I enquir'd
 The cause, they answer'd only with their tears ;
 Till from the princess Emmeline at last
 I learn'd, that all th' Icenians were that hour
 In silent march departed ; but their course
 She could not tell me : that her furious mother
 Had with a fell, determin'd, look enjoin'd them
 To wait her pleasure, which should soon be known ;
 Mean time to rest immoveable and mute.

SCENE

SCENE *the fourth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, *and an ICENIAN*
carrying a bowl.

VENUSIA.

My Dumnorix, defend me.

DUMNORIX.

Ha ! what means

This wild demeanour — wilt thou speak, Icenian ? —

Fear not my love ; thy Dumnorix is near.

What is that bowl, thou carry'st ?

ICENIAN.

If ought appears disorder'd in my gesture,
 Which ill becomes the reverence, I owe thee,
 Charge that demerit to my horrid errand,
 And not to me.

VENUSIA.

What will befall us now !

DUMNORIX *to the ICENIAN.*

Wilt thou begin ?

ICENIAN.

I come from Boadicia.

DUMNORIX.

Where is she ?

ICENIAN.

Far advanc'd o'er yonder vale.

DUMNORIX.

With what intention ?

ICENIAN.

To assail the Romans.

DUMNORIX.

Assail the Romans ?

ICENIAN.

To surprize their camp

At this dead hour with unexpected slaughter.

H

Before

Before she march'd, to me this secret charge
 In words, like these, she gave. " Observe our course ;
 " When I have pass'd the camp's extremest verge
 " Back to my daughters and Venusia speed :
 " Tell them, I go our fortune to restore,
 " If unsuccessful never to return.
 " Should that stern doom attend me, bid them take
 " The last, best gift, which dying I can leave them ;
 " That of my blood no part may prove dishonour'd.
 " The Trinobantian, of his Roman friends
 " So well deserving, may accept their grace."
 This said with wild emotion in her breast,
 Her visage black'ning with despair and horror,
 She straight committed to my trembling hands
 Two fatal bowls, which flow with poison'd streams.
 I have accomplish'd half my horrid task
 With Boadicia's daughters.

DUMNORIX.

Frantic woman !

Who hopes with fury and despair to match
 The vigilance and conduct of Suetonius.

ICENIAN.

From this ill-fated hand receive the draught,
 Whose hue and odour warrant it the juice
 Of that benumbing plant, the Druids gather ;
 That plant, whose drowsy moisture lulls the sense,
 And with a silent influence expels
 The unresisting spirit from her seat.

DUMNORIX.

Mistaken woman! did she deem Venusia
 Was unprovided of this friendly potion ——
 Perform thy orders ; bear it to my tent ——
 Thou mayst not want it yet —— take comfort, love.

S C E N E

SCENE *the fifth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, and a second
ICENIAN.

Second ICENIAN.

Oh! Dumnorix.

DUMNORIX.

Icenian, spare thy voice.

Thy flight, thy terrour, and thy wounds interpret
Too plainly.

Second ICENIAN.

We are vanquish'd.

DUMNORIX.

I believe thee.

Second ICENIAN.

Oh! I have much to tell thee — but I faint.

DUMNORIX to EBRANCUS

Conduct him hence, and learn the whole event.

SCENE *the sixth.*

VENUSIA and DUMNORIX.

VENUSIA.

On you, celestial arbiters, we call.

Now, as we stand environ'd by distress,

Now weigh our actions past, deform'd, or fair.

If e'er oppression hath defil'd his valour,

In help and pity to the woes of others

Our hearts been scanty, and our hands reserv'd,

Let our transgressions ratify our doom:

Else with your justice let our merits plead

To hold its shield before us, and repel

These undeserv'd misfortunes.

H 2

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

Heav'n may hear,
 And through that forest lead us still to safety.
 Ha! no; each pow'r against us is combin'd;
 What but their anger, levell'd at our heads,
 Could bring Tenantius back, so strictly charg'd
 To seek our home---The intercepting foes
 Have seiz'd the secret pass.

VENUSIA.

Whose guardian care
 Now to the gloomy shelter of a desert,
 To solitary innocence and peace
 Will guide our friendless orphans?

DUMNORIX.

True, Venusia.
 Through ev'ry trial heav'n is pleas'd to lead us.
 Droop not — one comfort never can forsake us.
 The mind, to virtue train'd, in ev'ry state
 Rejoicing, grieving, dying, must possess
 Th'exalted pleasure to exert that virtue.

SCENE *the seventh.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, and TENANTIUS.

VENUSIA.

Speak, speak, Tenantius.

TENANTIUS.

We pursu'd our course,
 But had not travell'd far, before we heard
 The sound of footsteps, dashing through the brook,
 Whose winding channel marks the secret way.
 Not long we stood in wonder, ere a troop
 Of Romans sally'd forth, and made us captives.

DUMNORIX.

Why then farewell to what was left of hope.

TENANTIUS.

Not so my lord.

VE.

VENUSIA.

Speak ; what resource is left ?

TENANTIUS.

We were conducted to the Roman leaders,
 One fierce and haughty, gentler far the other,
 Who calm'd his stern companion, gave us comfort,
 Nam'd thee with rev'rence, then an earnest zeal
 Disclosing for thy safety, and requesting
 A short, but friendly conference between you,
 With courtesy dismiss'd us.

VENUSIA.

Is he near ?

TENANTIUS.

Hard by he waits impatient for an answer,
 Just where the pass is open to the tent.

DUMNORIX.

What would the Roman ?

VENUSIA.

Hasten back Tenantius,
 And say, that Dumnorix consents to parley.

DUMNORIX.

Ha! trust our freedom in a Roman's pow'r ?

TENANTIUS.

Unarm'd and single will the Roman join thee.

DUMNORIX.

O ineffectual effort !

VENUSIA.

Only see him,

If but to parley for thy children's safety.
 Weak, as I am, unequal to these conflicts,
 I would embrace destruction, ere request thee
 Once to comply with ought below thy greatness.

DUMNORIX.

Let him approach.

SCENE

SCENE *the eighth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, and EBRANCUS.

DUMNORIX.

What hast thou learnt, my soldier?

EBRANCUS.

Like ours, th'Icenian force is all destroy'd.

DUMNORIX.

And Boadicia?

EBRANCUS.

Nought of her I know,

But that she found the Roman host embattled,

Which she had fondly deem'd immers'd in sleep.

DUMNORIX.

And so is fall'n a victim to her folly.

Retire.

SCENE *the ninth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, TENANTIUS, and FLAMINIUS.

TENANTIUS to FLAMINIUS.

Thy helmet, cast aside, restores thee

To my remembrance, Lo! thy benefactors.

FLAMINIUS.

Brave Dumnorix!

DUMNORIX.

My captive!

FLAMINIUS.

Yes, Flaminius,

Who owes to thy humanity his life.

DUMNORIX.

Where hast thou hid thee from my notice, rather

Whence now return'st, ennobled with command,

No

No more in thralldom, but a Roman leader?

FLAMINIUS.

Amid the tumult of your late defeat
We fought th'adjacent forest; thence we pass'd
The vale below and reach'd the Roman tents.

DUMNORIX.

And now are masters o' our late retreat, ———
Had I been cruel, Britain had been safe.

FLAMINIUS.

Was this an act unworthy of a soldier?

DUMNORIX.

Our woes are all the progeny of folly,
Not charg'd to thee or fortune.

VENUSIA.

Heav'n well pleas'd
Perhaps ordain'd this unforeseen event,
That our benevolence to brave Flaminius
Its due return of gratitude should find.

FLAMINIUS.

The life, you gave me, to your mutual welfare
I here devote. My influence, my pow'r,
My thoughts, my care to soften your afflictions,
Shall all combine. Surrender to your friend,
Before Suetonius with his legions pours
On your defenceless camp, who long in arms
Hath stood, expecting the appointed signal,
Which he enjoin'd us with the dawn to rear.

DUMNORIX.

Though thou didst well, accepting life from me,
That gift from thee must Dumnorix refuse.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou wilt not rob my gratitude of pow'r
To shew, how well thy goodness was bestow'd.

DUMNORIX.

Thou canst not shew it. If thou sav'st my life,
Canst thou from bonds protect me and a triumph?

FLA-

FLAMINIUS.

Alas! I cannot.

DUMNORIX.

Wouldst thou see me led

A sullen captive, and through haughty Rome

Inglorious count my paces to the clink

Of my own chains? this faithful woman too —

VENUSIA.

Like thee, disdains a being so preserv'd.

FLAMINIUS.

O let me water with my tears your feet!

If ev'ry drop, which issues from my heart,

Could from the doom, you justly scorn, secure you,

Before you now the purple sluice should open.

Yet let my knees in humblest adoration

Before such elevated virtue bend.

O godlike Britons, my acknowledg'd patrons

And benefactors, if my soul retain not

Your memory for ever dear and sacred;

May disappointment, poverty and shame

Deform my life, and pining sickness close

My youthful eyes untimely in the grave.

DUMNORIX.

Thou seem'st of all the Romans to possess

A heart, which feels for others. Rise, and hear.

Though we reject the wretched boon of life,

Thou may'st, Flaminius, yet repay our bounty.

FLAMINIUS.

Then will I ask no other grace from heav'n.

DUMNORIX.

We have two children.

VENUSIA.

O my bleeding heart!

My poor, deserted infants, whom these arms

No more must cherish, nor my lulling voice

Hush in the quiet of my sheltring bosom!

DUM-

DUMNORIX *aside*.

Yet shall not this unman me. I will feel
A father's anguish, but conceal the pain.

[To Flam

Know then, I meant this faithful friend, Tenantius,
Should traverse yonder wood, and bear my sons
Far from these borders to extremest north,
Where they might dwell secure, nor share the ills,
Doom'd to their parents. Willt thou let him pass?

FLAMINIUS.

I will, and Jove be witness to my word.

DUMNORIX.

Give thy last charge, Venusia, to Tenantius.
One word apart with thee, my Roman friend.
As thou art gen'rous, answer me with truth.
When wilt thou make thy signal?

FLAMINIUS.

At the dawn,
Whose beams though faint already tinge the east.

DUMNORIX.

What time will bring your legions near this tent.

FLAMINIUS.

An hour at farthest.

DUMNORIX.

I have heard, Flaminius,
Of your forefathers' spirit, how they fell
Oft on their swords to shun ignoble bondage;
This part have we to act: and, friendly Roman;
When thou shalt see our cold remains — my own
Are little worth attention — Oh! remember
Venusia's goodness, and her gentle clay
Defend from shame and insult.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou dost pierce
My heart — I cannot answer — but believe
These tears sincere.

I

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

Enough. Perform thy promise.
Thy obligations will be then discharg'd.
Farewell. Fulfill thy gen'ral's commands.

SCENE *the tenth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, and TENANTIUS.

VENUSIA *to* TENANTIUS.

Thou future parent of my orphan babes,
Soon as their gen'rous minds imbibe thy precepts,
And thy example warms their budding virtues,
Do not forget to tell them, that no perils,
Nor death in all its terrours can efface
Maternal love; that their ill-fated mother
Amid this awful season of distress
Wept, but for them, and lost her fears in fondness.

DUMNORIX.

We have been long companions, brave Tenantius,
Thy leader I, once fortunate and great,
And thou my faithful and intrepid soldier.
Nay, do not weep — we have not time for wailing.
By thy approv'd fidelity and love
Thy chief, just ent'ring death's unfolded gates,
Stops, and once more conjures thee to retain
This his last charge in memory — his children.

SCENE *the eleventh.*

VENUSIA and DUMNORIX.

DUMNORIX.

The sun is ris'n. All hail! thou last of days
To this nigh-finish'd being. Radiant pow'r,
Thou through thy endless journey mayst proclaim,
That Dumnorix dy'd free, for thou shalt view it.

Behold

Behold th' appointed signal from the grove,
 Just as Flaminius warn'd us, is appear'd
 To call Suetonius, and his legions on.
 Come, desolation, tyranny resort
 To thy new seat; come, slavery, and bend
 The neck of Albion, all her sons debase,
 And ancient virtue from their hearts expel.
 Now then, ye honour'd mansions of our fathers,
 Ye hallow'd altars, and ye awful groves,
 The habitation of our gods, farewell!
 And yet the guilty auth'ress of these woes
 Deserves a share of praise, who, still retaining
 One unextinguish'd spark of gen'rous honour,
 Scorn'd to remain spectatress, or partaker
 Of Albion's fall, and, dying, still is free.
 Need I say more, Venusia?

VENUSIA.

Oh! my lord.

DUMNORIX.

Why heaves that sigh?

VENUSIA.

Alas! I am a woman.

DUMNORIX.

True, a defenceless woman, and expos'd
 To keener sorrow by thy matchless beauty;
 That charm, which captivates the victor's eye,
 Yet helpless to withstand his savage force,
 Throws wretched woman under double ruin.
 But wherefore this? Thy virtue knows its duty.

VENUSIA.

Stay but a little.

DUMNORIX. *aside.*

Would I might for years!
 But die that thought — False tenderness, away.
 'Thou British genius, who art now retiring
 From this lost region, yet suspend thy flight;
 And in this conflict lend me all thy spirit——

We only ask thee to be free and die.
 Well, my Venusia ; is thy soul resolv'd ?
 Or shall I still afford a longer pause ?

VENUSIA.

Though my weak sex by nature is not arm'd
 With fortitude, like thine, of this be sure ;
 That dear subjection to thy honour'd will,
 Which hath my life directed, ev'n in death
 Shall not forsake me ; and thy faithful wife
 Shall with obedience meet thy last commands.
 But canst thou tell me ; is it hard to die ?

DUMNORIX.

Oh ! rather ask me, if to live in shame,
 Captivity and sorrow be not hard ?

VENUSIA.

Oh ! miserable !

DUMNORIX.

In a foreign land
 The painful toils of servitude to bear
 From an imperious mistress ?

VENUSIA.

Dreadful thought !

DUMNORIX.

Or be insulted with the hateful love
 Of some proud master ?

VENUSIA.

Oh ! proceed

No further !

DUMNORIX.

From thy native seat of dwelling,
 From all the known endearments of thy home,
 From parents, children, friends and --- husband torn.

VENUSIA.

Stop there, and reach the potion ; nor to drink
 The cure of troubles will I longer pause.

SCENE

SCENE *the twelfth.*

VENUSIA.

For ev'ry pass'd possession of delight,
 Both in my offspring, and their godlike fire,
 A dying matron bends her grateful knee,
 Ye all disposing pow'rs! as now these blessings
 Must reach their period, to my sons transfer
 That copious goodness, I have shar'd so long!
 Through my resigning soul that promise breathe,
 And my last moments comfort thus with peace!

SCENE *the thirteenth.*VENUSIA *and* DUMNORIX *with a bowl.*

DUMNORIX *aside, seeing Venusia on her knees.*
 Now resolution, now be doubly arm'd
 [*He gives her the bowl and she drinks.*]
 Now stand awhile before the fanning breeze.
 So with its subtle energy the potion,
 Less rudely stealing on the pow'rs of life,
 Will best perform its office to remove
 Pain, fear and grief for ever from thy breast.
 How dost thou fare, Venusia?

VENUSIA.

 I perceive
 No alteration. Every sense remains
 Yet unimpair'd. Then while these moments last,
 Let me on thee direct my eyes to gaze,
 While unobstructed still their sight endures;
 Let me receive thee to my faithful bosom,
 Before my heart is motionless and cold:
 Speak to me, Dumnorix! my lord! my husband!
 Give one kind accent to thy dying wife,
 Ere yet my ears be frozen, and thy voice

Be

Be heard no longer ; join thy lip to mine,
While I can feel thy last and tend'rest kisses.

DUMNORIX.

Yes, I will utter to thy dying ear
All my fond heart, sustain thee on my bosom,
And cheer thy parting spirit in its flight.
Oh! where'soe'er thy fleeting breath shall pass,
Whate'er new body, as the Druids sing,
Thou shalt inform hereafter, still thy soul,
Thou gentle, kind, and ever-pleasing creature ;
Shall bear its own felicity along,
Still in its native sweetness shall be blest'd,
And in its virtue, which can thus subdue
The fear of death, still brave the pow'r of fortune.
But thou beginst to droop.

VENUSIA.

My eyes grow dizzy.

DUMNORIX *aside*.

Keep firm, my heart,

VENUSIA:

A heaviness, like sleep,
O'ercomes my senses ---- Every limb is faint ---
Thy voice is scarce distinguish'd in my ears.

DUMNORIX.

Indeed!

VENUSIA.

Alas ! thou lookst so kindly on me!
My weak, and darken'd sight deceives me sure,
Or thy fond eye did never yet o'erflow
With tenderness, like this.

DUMNORIX.

I never view'd thee

For the last time.

VENUSIA.

Look, look upon me still
Why dost thou turn thy face away?

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

For nothing.

VENUSIA.

Nay, thou art weeping, Dumnorix----and wherefore
Wouldst thou conceal thy tears ?

DUMNORIX.

I cannot hide them.

VENUSIA.

And dost thou weep ?

DUMNORIX.

I do.

VENUSIA.

Then didst thou love me
With such excess of fondness.----For Venusia
Do these soft streams bedew that awful face ?

DUMNORIX.

Love thee ! Behold, when Albion groans around me,
Yet thou these springs of tenderness canst open
To wet the cheeks of British Dumnorix.

VENUSIA.

Oh ! extacy ! which stops my parting soul,
And gives it vigour to enjoy these transports.
Once more receive me to thy breast.

DUMNORIX.

Venusia !

VENUSIA.

Thy tenderness makes death delightful to me -----
Oh ! I would speak — would answer to thy kindness —
My fault'ring tongue —

DUMNORIX.

What sayst thou ?

VENUSIA.

Cease to grieve —

No pain molests me — ev'ry thought is calm —
Support my drowsy burthen to that couch —
Where death — serenely smiles.

SCENE

SCENE *the fourteenth.*

FLAMINIUS *speaking to the Romans behind the Scene.*

My warlike friends,
Keep back —— our troops on ev'ry side advance.
I cannot long controll them. Yet I tremble
To enter there——By heav'n he lives, and sees me.

SCENE *the fifteenth.*

FLAMINIUS *and DUMNORIX with his sword drawn.*

DUMNORIX.

Importunate Flaminius! Art thou come
To rob my dying moments of their quiet?

FLAMINIUS.

Forgive the crime of ignorance——Forgive,
Since accident hath join'd us once again,
If strong compassion at thy fate yet pleads——

DUMNORIX.

What, when Venusia is no more?

FLAMINIUS.

No more !

DUMNORIX.

No; and be further lesson'd by a Briton,
Who since his union with the best of women
Hath never known an interval from love,
And at this solemn pause yet melts in fondness:
While death's black curtain shrouds my cold Venusia,
Of dearer value doth my soul esteem her,
Than should those eyes rekindle into lustre,
And ev'ry charm revive with double pow'r
Of winning beauty, if alone to shine
Amid the gloom of bondage.

FLA-

FLAMINIUS.

I will urge
No more ——— farewell ——— our legions hover nigh.

SCENE *the sixteenth.*

DUMNORIX.

Now in my breast resume thy wonted seat,
Thou manly firmness, which so oft has borne me
Through ev'ry toil and danger. O return,
Rise o'er my sorrow, and compleat thy last,
Thy highest task, to close a life of glory——
They come—Be swift, my sword——By thee to fall,
Near that dear clay extended, best becomes
A soldier's courage, and a husband's love.

SCENE *the last.*

ÆNOBARBUS, FLAMINIUS, and ROMANS.

ÆNOBARBUS.

To Boadicia's quarter I advanc'd
At thy request, who since her last defeat,
Blind with despair and disappointed fury,
Fled to her tent; expiring there I found her
With one ill-fated daughter, both by poison:
Nor had the friendly Emmeline escap'd,
But by the swift prevention of my hand.
Dost thou not thank me, whose suggestion prompted
Our quick return to seize the secret pass?
Thou gav'st me freedom; love and fame repay thee.

FLAMINIUS.

If thou couldst add, that Dumnorix surviv'd?

ÆNOBARBUS *looking into the tent.*

Thou seest, the Gods have otherwise decreed.
Forbear to mingle vain regret with conquest.
He hath done nobly. Fair befall his urn.

K

Death

Death is his triumph, which a captive life
Had forfeited to Rome, with all the praise,
Now from the virtuous to his ashes due.

FLAMINIUS.

Then art thou fall'n at last, thou mighty tow'r,
And more than Roman edifice of glory?
See too Venusia, pale in death's embrace,
Presents her faded beauties. Lovely ruin!
Of ev'ry grace and virtue once the seat,
The last kind office from my hand receive,
Which shall unite thee to thy husband's side,
And to one grave your mingling reliques trust.
There soon a hallow'd monument shall rise.
Insculptur'd laurel with the myrtle twin'd,
The well-wrought stone adorning, shall proclaim
His gen'rous valour, and thy faithful love.

End of the last act.



EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. HAVARD.

NOW we have shewn the fatal fruits of strife,
A hero bleeding with a virtuous wife,
A field of war embro'd with nation's gore,
Which to the dust the hopes of Albion bore,
If weak description, and the languid flow
Of strains unequal to this theme of woe
Have fail'd to move the sympathizing breast,
And no soft eyes their melting sense exprest;
Not all the wit, this after scene might share,
Can give success, where you refus'd a tear;
Much less, if haply still the poet's art
Hath stol'n persuasive to the feeling heart.
Will he with fancy's wanton hand efface
From gen'rous minds compassion's pleasing trace,
Nor from their thoughts, while pensive they pursue
This maze of sorrow, snatch the moral clue:
If yet to him those pow'rs of sacred song
To melt the heart and raise the mind belong.
Dar'd he to hope, this sketch of early youth
Might stand th'award of nature and of truth:
Encourag'd thus, hereafter might he soar
With double strength, and loftier scenes explore,
And following fortune through her various wiles,
Shew struggling virtue, dress'd in tears, or smiles;
Perhaps his grateful labours would requite
With frequent offerings one propitious night.

M. P. U. O. I. U. M.

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